



# Generations

---

The journal of the New Brunswick Genealogical Society/Société Généalogique du N-Brunswick  
Volume 41 No. 3 Fall 2019 ISSN 0821-5359



"Lakeside, Kennebecasis, Hampton NB" Painting by H. J. DeForest. See page 3.

\$9.00

# Henry Josiah DeForest (1855-1924)

A Largely Forgotten New Brunswick Born Artist

Graham M. Segger<sup>1</sup>



Henry Josiah DeForest c. 1908<sup>2</sup>

H. J. DeForest was a rare example of a New Brunswick born artist who was able to devote himself to his chosen passion of landscape painting and find a ready market for the sale of his creations throughout most of his adult life. Unfortunately, that market was not in his home province. Henry was born in N.B., travelled extensively throughout Europe and Australasia in the late nineteenth century, settled into the arts establishment in Vancouver, and died in Calgary. Interestingly, from a genealogical perspective, several important details about his life have been subject to widespread misinformation, some even emanating from Henry himself. While the principal objective of this article is to raise Henry's profile and highlight his contributions to the arts, I will also strive to clarify a few of these genealogical facts and provide insights into the United Empire Loyalist and New England Planter family backgrounds of Henry and his wife Ruth. The story comes complete with several hints of intrigue<sup>1</sup> and a fascinating dive into the genealogical resources of multiple provinces. I will defer most of the family history details to the second half of the article.

I first learned of Henry J. DeForest in 1980 when I purchased one of his modestly priced oil paintings at a Sotheby's Canadian art auction in Toronto. I fell in love with that painting which led to

a 40 year effort to learn more about his life, his art and yes, his ancestors.

## An Introduction to the Art of H.J. DeForest

Henry was first and foremost a landscape painter whose chosen medium was oil paint on canvas or board. He was born in 1855 in pre-Confederation New Brunswick in the heart of the Victorian age. A study of his artistic output throughout his career suggests that he was constantly striving to capture the "true to nature" grandeur and magnificence of the scenery he was painting<sup>3</sup>. Arthur Mowbray made the following commentary on Mr. DeForest's work in a 1916 newspaper review – "... exhibits examples of what is no doubt a mature style. His drawing is good, and his color effects enjoyable. A little more freedom of handling would greatly improve these pictures; they appear to us a little too precise, though as transcripts of actual scenes they no doubt have an accuracy that the impressionist is apt to lose. They would reproduce admirably as color illustrations to a work on B.C. Scenery."<sup>4</sup>

He loved travelling to some of the most beautiful and often remote areas of the world where he would prepare sketches and paintings for future refinement. In 1881 he and his wife Ruth went on a hiking trip in Switzerland and south-eastern France and carved the names of the mountains and passes which they climbed into Alpenstock walking sticks which have been preserved in the Museum of Vancouver<sup>5</sup>. In 1887 through 1890 he travelled extensively throughout Australia and New Zealand and in 1893 settled briefly in Vancouver before travelling to Europe for two more years. Returning to Canada in September 1896 he again settled in Vancouver. During his life he travelled to and painted scenes as geographically diverse as Niagara Falls, the Yosemite Valley, the Kilauea volcano in Hawaii and many of the great mountain ranges of the Canadian north-west and New Zealand. He was a contemporary of many of the great French impressionists and would likely have been exposed to their work while studying in Paris in 1896. Henry also featured in some of the same exhibits as Emily Carr in Vancouver in the period 1909 through 1912. Despite these influences he

## Henry Josiah DeForest (1855-1924)

rarely strayed from his adherence to the strict lines of nature and perhaps shared the prevailing view in London and Paris art establishments of the decadence of the new patchy landscape style. History has shown us that this reluctance to adopt a less literal style may have undermined his chance for a more lasting place in art history.

Bernard McEvoy was an influential member of the early Vancouver art scene and editorial writer for one of Vancouver's leading newspapers - The Province. He wrote the following in a 1910 Opportunities Magazine article – "When he had secured all the elementary training that Canada could give him, he started for London in 1879, where he took full advantage of study at South Kensington, fol-

lowing it up with further courses in Paris and Italy. During a prolonged tour that lasted until 1882, he saw most of the great masterpieces of the world, and stayed long at the principal artistic centres."<sup>6</sup> Several sources have also asserted that he studied with J.D. Moultray in Edinburgh and at l'Académie Julian in Paris<sup>7</sup>.

The 1894 painting titled *Moonlit Lake* displayed below captures some of the essence of H.J. DeForest for me. I interpret this as Henry portraying himself sitting alone on the remote shoreline of a wilderness lake sketching the scene before him with mountains in the background. I am a sailor so the fact that he introduced a sailboat in the middle distance provides further appeal.



1894 Moonlit Lake<sup>8</sup>

While the vast majority of Henry's paintings used mountain scenery as subjects, the following 1895 maritime themed painting titled *Seascape* from the collection of the New Brunswick Museum reflects some of his maritime roots. Maritime province scenes which he painted included Digby

Gut (twice), the Brown Flats on the St. John River, the Beach at Portsborough, Back Bay in Clifton, Germantown and I am sure many more yet to be re-discovered. I encourage any readers who have access to any of his paintings to reach out to me (graham {dot} segger {at} gmail {dot} com).

Henry Josiah DeForest (1855-1924)



1895 Seascape<sup>9</sup> (A64.11 - New Brunswick Museum - Musée du Nouveau-Brunswick [www.nbm-mnb.ca](http://www.nbm-mnb.ca))

Another of my favourite DeForest paintings is the following 1901 scene of the Middle Bonnington Falls on the Kootenay River, BC. Henry described the Bonnington Falls as the “Niagara of the West”<sup>10</sup>. Unfortunately hydro electric damming of

the river obliterated this waterfall shortly after he painted it. This was one of at least three paintings of the Kootenay River which he produced, including a commission for the president of the Bonnington Falls Power Company<sup>11</sup>.



1901 Middle Bonnington Falls<sup>12</sup>

## Henry Josiah DeForest (1855-1924)

A more typical example of his body of work would be the following black and white image of a painting titled *A Rugged Corner of Jervis Inlet* which was exhibited at both the 1906 Canadian

National Exhibition, Department of Fine Arts curated by the Ontario Society of Artists in Toronto and the 1906 Dominion Exhibition in Halifax curated by the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts.



1906 *A Rugged Corner of Jervis Inlet*<sup>13</sup>

Henry also attended and had one of his paintings exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition (aka Chicago World's Fair) in the summer of 1893<sup>14</sup>.

If I had a personal criticism of Mr. DeForest's work it might be that there is often a feeling of detachment between the painter / viewer and the scene portrayed, particularly in his later works. It was also relatively rare for him to include human figures in his paintings, and seldom indigenous people. A partial list of public institutions where his art is preserved is contained in the endnotes<sup>15</sup>.

### **The Life of a Turn of the 20th Century Landscape Painter**

In Henry DeForest's time sustaining oneself as a full time artist would have been a difficult enterprise, as it still remains today. Emily Carr spent a large portion of her life running a boarding house and most of the Group of Seven had jobs as

graphic designers. How then did Henry DeForest manage to devote much of his life to travel, study and full time painting? It is unlikely that he would have had significant personal family funds to rely on as his mother was widowed when Henry was six and though she remarried four years later she went on to have two more children to support. When I determined that Henry had married a significantly older widow in 1879, and immediately left for extended travel and study in Europe, I could not resist the impulse to examine the Probate records of his wife's former husband John Wood (1824-1872). Sure enough, a reasonably substantial estate had been left to Ruth (Newcomb) Wood. See later section titled Henry's Wives for more detail and references.

Henry may have received early support from his wife's estate but he showed himself to be a savvy marketer of his artistic output and diligent in the production of his craft. While living in New Zealand in 1889-1890 he produced well over one hun-

## Henry Josiah DeForest (1855-1924)

dred sketches and paintings, some of which he sold as commissions, some through retail outlets and most through an innovative personal Art Union lottery system<sup>16</sup>. He received the permission of the Colonial Secretary to sell tickets which would entitle the holder to receive at minimum one 8 inch by 12 inch oil painting (likely a rough field draft) with a chance to win one of several much larger and more valuable canvases. He held one auction in Nelson, NZ on the South Island in September 1889<sup>17</sup> and another in Auckland on the North Island in November 1890<sup>18</sup>. During the 1890 sale Mr. DeForest reported that a book of 25 tickets had been stolen from his studio which was located in Room 102 of the Victoria Arcade Building<sup>19</sup>. Vancouver newspapers in both 1894 and 1902 also reported on Art Union sales by Mr. DeForest in that town<sup>20</sup>. Despite all of the wonderful paintings of the rugged beauty of New Zealand created by Mr. DeForest the only entry he received in what may be the authoritative reference book on nineteenth century New Zealand painters was – “De Forest, H. J. - A Canadian [?] who painted in Nelson in 1889”<sup>21</sup>.

After a decade of travel the DeForests returned to New Brunswick in September 1891 and settled into a quiet life in Taylor Village near Moncton where Henry spent the year working full time on his oil paintings. In September through November 1892 Henry introduced his work to the New Brunswick public for the first time in a series of public exhibitions. These were held in Dorchester, Sackville, Moncton, Petitcodiac and St. John followed by exhibitions in Montreal and Ottawa the following January and April<sup>22</sup>. The St. John exhibition at Berryman’s Hall was extended to ten days and on Saturday, 19 November 1892 the “teachers and children of the various schools were admitted at the reduced rate of five cents, boys in the morning, girls in the afternoon”<sup>23</sup>.

Mr. DeForest was by most reports a sociable man, though perhaps a little elitist. Wherever he settled he was quick to join various clubs and fraternal organizations. He also played the organ and both he and Mrs. Ruth DeForest were excellent singers, not surprising perhaps given their Maritime roots and the Fowler and Burnett families’ musical traditions. There are reports of him singing at a benefit for the Young Men’s Institute in Nelson, NZ in April 1889<sup>24</sup>. In 1903 and 1904 the Maritime Provinces Association in Vancouver had over 700 members and Mr. DeForest sang and

gave recitals during at least two of their large gatherings. He was a very active member of fraternal organizations such as the freemasons<sup>25</sup> and also the Knights of Pythias, Crusader Lodge No. 12. There can be little doubt that these connections would have been beneficial to his art sales in that day and age.

Henry was also a member and often a director or officer of many of the early arts organizations in Vancouver including the Arts, Historical and Scientific Association (AHSA - forerunner of the Museum of Vancouver), the Arts & Crafts Association, the Royal Agricultural and Industrial Society Exhibition at New Westminster, the Vancouver Studio Club, the Vancouver Photographic Society and the British Columbia Society of Fine Arts<sup>26</sup>. He was also responsible for hanging the paintings for some of the large B.C. provincial art exhibitions in the early years of the twentieth century.

Henry was one of the founders in 1894 and the initial Secretary of the AHSA and the museum it founded. In 1905 he was appointed the first Curator of the museum housed on the third floor of the Carnegie Library Building<sup>27</sup>, a post he held for many years. Henry also donated or loaned a number of paintings and other artifacts from his travels to the museum<sup>28</sup>, including his coin collection. Three times during his tenure as Curator there were night time break-ins which resulted in the theft of coin collections which were on loan to the museum.

In Canadian census forms of 1901, 1911 and 1921 Mr. DeForest was enumerated in Vancouver and indicated his stated profession to be “artist”<sup>29</sup>. He also listed himself as such in annual Vancouver City Directories at least nine times in the years 1894 through 1915<sup>30</sup>. He supplemented his income by teaching art classes, sometimes doing so in more distant communities such as Nanaimo. Mr. DeForest frequently embarked on extended summer sketching trips throughout the British Columbia back country.

### Setting the Genealogical Facts Straight

There are two significant recurring contradictions with H.J. DeForest’s genealogical record. One relates to his year and place of birth and the other to the spelling of his surname. The generally acknowledged authoritative works for researching Canadian artists of his style and period were written by William Colgate (1923), Albert Robson

## Henry Josiah DeForest (1855-1924)

(1932) and J. Russell Harper (1971)<sup>31</sup>. A history of New Brunswick artists was also published in 1967 by Tweedie, Copswell and Stewart<sup>32</sup>. All four of these resources list H.J. DeForest's year of birth as 1860, some say in St. John and some say in Rothesay, N.B.. It appears likely that the three later books relied on the initial Colgate work as a reference for the year of birth. The Government of Canada's "Artists in Canada" website entry<sup>33</sup> and the National Gallery of Canada's artist index card also provide the incorrect 1860 year of birth.

I have not found a birth registration for Henry Josiah DeForest, but his baptism was recorded in Hampton Parish, Kings County, New Brunswick on 24 June 1855<sup>34</sup>. Henry "I." DeForest was reported as six years old on the 1861 Canadian cen-

sus in French Village, NB and the birth month and day of 5 Feb are reported on the 1901 Canadian Census and his 1924 death registration<sup>35</sup>. Given the Hampton baptism, it is likely that he was born closer to Rothesay than St. John and that is what was reported in one of his obituaries. I've so far been unable to locate an 1851/52 census return for his parents.

The variation in the spelling of his last name is a little more difficult to understand as Henry himself was complicit in disseminating some of the differences. Between 1889 and about 1910 he signed most, but not all, of his paintings as "H.J. DeForest". Thereafter, and occasionally before, he used the form "H.J. de Forest".



Signatures

There is also debate about whether there should be a space before the "F" and are also numerous examples throughout the historical record of double "r" being used in his surname. In one perplexing example a booklet co-authored by Henry included his name spelled with both single and double "r" in different sections of the publication<sup>36</sup>. Inexcusably, J. Russell Harper in his 1971 book *Early Painters and Engravers in Canada* uses the "DeForrest" spelling even while citing as his sources Robson and Colgate, who had the spelling correct. I've also encountered index and auction entries using spellings as diverse as DeForist and Frost. This confusion about the spelling of the name has dogged the family right from their early land grants in New Brunswick.

Many researchers also claim that Henry spent the last three years of his life in Banff while in fact he was living in Calgary during that period, but did rent a small summer home on Beaver St. in Banff during July and August of 1921<sup>37</sup>.

Most sources also contain an error with respect to Henry's first wife's surname. Ruth J. Newcomb's maiden name is often assigned a final "e" which does not exist with her ancestors or her early genealogical records (see later Newcomb section).

### Henry's Wives

Henry married twice, both times to 45 year old women, which goes a long way toward explaining why there is no record of any direct offspring. A significant difference between his two marriages is that the first time<sup>38</sup> he was 21 years younger than his previously widowed spouse, Ruth J. (Newcomb) Wood and the second time<sup>39</sup> he was 21 years older than his spinster spouse, Grace Porter Franks (1875-1967)<sup>40</sup>.

It is always tricky trying to decipher the social and moral nuances of periods so long past, but there is at least anecdotal evidence which indicates that both of these marriages were the catalysts for significant life changes for the DeForests. Immediately after his first marriage in 1879 Henry and Ruth left N.B. and never settled permanently in the province again (they did return for just over a year in 1891-92). After his second marriage in 1921 Henry moved almost immediately from Vancouver to Calgary. Henry's 1879 marriage to Ruth is not currently documented in the NBGS Family Profile for Ruth (Newcomb) Wood and her father Barnaby Newcomb<sup>41</sup>. Ruth was a Methodist and Henry an

## Henry Josiah DeForest (1855-1924)

Anglican. He once wrote of the Church of England that “life is scarce worth living beyond its pale” and he was an active member of Anglican churches wherever he lived.

Ruth Newcomb had married Captain John Wood (1824-1872) on 17 Jun 1854 and together they had five children between 1855 and 1869<sup>42</sup>. Unfortunately, the last four died as infants and the eldest, Herbert H. Wood, died in 1875 at the age of 21<sup>43</sup>. John Wood was a successful ship captain and merchant who died of that common generic term “consumption”<sup>44</sup>. He died intestate but a probate inventory signed off by the two older brothers of Ruth and John (bondsmen and appraisers) one month after his death shows that he had a substantial estate of \$7,935.90<sup>45</sup> which included a house and mercantile business. The probate file also contains one sour note relating to the distribution of this estate. Lovett Mortimer Wood (1858-1914)<sup>46</sup>, a nephew of John, filed a Citation with the Probate Court in 1879 against Ruth claiming that he should be an heir to the estate. Lovett, son of John’s younger brother Isaac Wood (1830-1865) was orphaned in 1865<sup>47</sup> and is enumerated as living with John and Ruth Wood in the 1871 census in Hopewell, Albert County, N.B.<sup>48</sup>. A reasonable assumption would be that Lovett was taken in by John and Ruth after the death of his own parents and with the death of so many of John and Ruth’s own children he was perhaps treated as part of the family and hoped for a share of the estate. With John Wood dying Intestate, Mortimer’s chances of success would not have been high. His application came the same week that Ruth married Henry J. DeForest in St. John and the Citation claims that Ruth was leaving the province for Boston that week. As speculated earlier, the size of the estate may explain how Ruth and Henry were able to finance their extensive global travels and studies in Europe and Australasia over the following ten years. Ruth, who went by the nickname “Bird or Birdie”, was also a fine singer, whist player and active in the Women’s Canadian Club in Vancouver. She was quite infirm in her final years and has been reported to have been blind. Ruth died on 17

Nov 1919 at the age of 87. Her estate was valued at \$5,305.46<sup>49</sup> with Henry as the executor and beneficiary.

It was eighteen months after Ruth’s death when Henry married Grace P. Frank(s) in Vancouver. Sadly Henry and Grace had only three years together as he died in 1924<sup>50</sup>. Grace did not re-marry and died in 1967. As with Henry and Ruth, there are some variations in the spelling of Grace’s surname. Her birth registration and her family’s early census records use “Frank” but her 1921 marriage certificate and her headstone use the spelling “Franks”.

Henry, Ruth and Grace are all buried in the masonic section of Mountain View Cemetery in Vancouver and share the same headstone<sup>51</sup>.

### Henry J. DeForest’s Youth

Henry Josiah’s father, Josiah Fowler DeForest (1821-1861)<sup>52</sup>, recorded his profession as blacksmith when he married his first cousin<sup>53</sup> Anah Jane Fowler (1824-1906)<sup>54</sup> on 25 Sept 1850<sup>55</sup>. James and Anah had six children between 1851 and 1860, only two of whom survived (Henry Josiah DeForest and James Fowler DeForest Jr.). Handed down DeForest family stories tell of Anah’s distress at having to watch several of her children die of scarlet fever. James F. died from complications after being kicked by a horse he was shoeing when Henry J. was six years old and his mother Anah and her two sons then moved in with her father Josiah Fowler (1794-1870) on the north side of the Hammond River in French Village, Kings County<sup>56</sup>. Four years later in 1865 Anah married George Harding Burnett (1805-1898), a farmer, singing instructor, and widower from Norton, Kings County<sup>57</sup>.

The painting below is a very early example of Henry Josiah DeForest’s work and is believed to be a scene on the Kennebecasis near where he grew up. Note the fish traps to the left, indicative of a tidal environment.



## Henry Josiah DeForest (1855-1924)



1879 Lakeside, Kennebecasis<sup>58</sup>  
(see also larger picture on cover)

Sometime between 1871 and 1876 Anah and George Burnett moved to Maccon, Cumberland Co., Nova Scotia near Amherst, N.S.<sup>59</sup>. Henry has been reported as attending the Sackville Academy though I've not yet been able to confirm this fact. He has described living and working in Petitcodiac in 1876 where "he was called upon to assist with musical entertainments" and was a regular attendant at the Anglican Church<sup>60</sup>. I'm not sure how Henry met Ruth (Newcomb) Wood, but she was also living at the top of the Bay of Fundy at the time of their marriage. Throughout Ruth and Henry's marriage they visited periodically with their DeForest, Burnett, Newcomb, Wood and Fowler relatives, including Henry's younger brother James Fowler DeForest (1857-1934)<sup>61</sup> and two half siblings George Burpee Burnett (1866-1958) and A. Maud S. J. (Burnett) Chapman (1868-Aft. 1921). These visits often punctuated their various international travels.

### The DeForest Ancestors

Initially I was able to link into a few NBGS Family Profiles and public family trees<sup>62</sup> to help focus my research on Henry's ancestors. Henry J. helpfully documented a five generation DeForest male ancestor chart as supplied to him in 1892 by his cousin George A. DeForest of Jersey City Heights,

NJ<sup>63</sup>. It read Henry Josiah DeForest, son of James Fowler DeForest, son of Henry DeForest, son of Nathan DeForest, son of Ephraim DeForest the Loyalist. Another helpful resource has been family history charts prepared in the 1960s by John Rutherford Heron (1897-1983) based on extensive family interviews and research<sup>64</sup> as well as at least one family bible detailing the family of Henry DeForest (1790-1866). My own research is generally consistent with these accounts of Henry's descent from Ephraim DeForest (1742-1827)<sup>65</sup> and his son Nathan DeForest (1765-1840)<sup>66</sup> but it is important to note that I have not yet proven all the details to a genealogical proof standard which I am totally comfortable with. This is particularly so as it relates to exact dates of birth. Researchers have been somewhat handicapped by the absence of baptism records in Kings County prior to 1816. The descent has also not yet been proven through an accepted claim to the United Empire Loyalists Association of Canada though such a claim is currently being researched and Henry's 2 x great grandfather Ephraim is listed on the UELAC Directory of Loyalists. Ephraim is profiled in *The Revolutionary Soldiers of Redding, Connecticut* as a member of the Loyal Association of Reading, is on the ship's list for the Union Transport, 1783 as a shoemaker from Reading<sup>67</sup>, Connecticut<sup>68</sup>, has several Revolutionary War claims for loss Memorials, and is well represented in the British Headquarters Papers,

## Henry Josiah DeForest (1855-1924)

New York City 1774-1783 (Carleton Papers). He was allocated a lot on the north side of Kennebecasis Bay, Kings County (just north-west of the northern tip of Long Island) on 27 Jan 1786<sup>69</sup> and his name also appears on nine other N.B. land petitions between 1785 and 1791. One of my reasons for writing this article is to solicit further assistance from those who have more fulsome primary evidence relating to the descent from Ephraim to Henry Josiah. I'd be happy to write a sequel to this article when such documentation emerges.

Most people have eight great grandparents. Because Henry's parents were cousins, he had only six. All six of those grandparents were born in the USA and arrived in New Brunswick in the post Revolutionary War period. One set was Ephraim's son Nathan DeForest<sup>70</sup> and his wife Anah (Hoyt) DeForest (1767-1849), daughter of Israel Hoyt. Another set was Gabriel J. Fowler (1757-1832), son of Josiah Fowler (1715-1808), a proven Loyalist, and Gabriel's wife Jane (Hatfield) Fowler (1751-1840). The final set of great grandparents was James Fowler (1758-1802)<sup>71</sup> and Rachel (Hart) Fowler (1765-1838).

### Ruth Newcomb and her New England Planter Ancestors

Ruth (Newcomb / Wood) DeForest also descended from one of the early families of the Maritimes, specifically the Newcomb family which arrived in Cornwallis in 1769 to occupy lands recently vacated due to the deportation of the French Acadians. I have used as my initial source for information about the Newcomb family the encyclopedic book by John Bearse Newcomb titled *Genealogical Memoir of the Newcomb Family*<sup>72</sup>.

While Henry J. DeForest is not documented in the 1874 version of this book, his marriage to Ruth (Newcomb) Wood in 1879 is included in the revised version of 1923<sup>73</sup>. I appreciate that the Newcomb book is by no means primary evidence, but the scope of the research and the depth of the commentary suggest that it was assembled in a diligent manner from family sources. The revised version also benefits from almost 50 years of scru-

tiny and updates to the original. What follows is a brief summary of a few pertinent details about Ruth's family culled from the Newcomb book.

Ruth's parents were Barnaby Holmes Newcomb (1805-1884) and Lavinia Freelove Calhoun (1809-1861). Barnaby was born in Cornwallis, N.S. but moved to Albert County, N.B. when he was 20 to work in the shipbuilding trade. Lavinia was from Albert Co., N.B. and they eventually settled on a farm in Shepody near Hopewell Hill. Barnaby was a direct descendant of Deacon John Newcomb (born 1688 on Martha's Vineyard-died 1765 in Cornwallis, NS) and his son John Newcomb (1720-1788) who were both original grantees of Cornwallis, Nova Scotia in 1769<sup>74</sup>. The Newcombs were prominent members of the Lebanon, Connecticut (20 miles east of Hartford) community before relocating to Cornwallis. The descent then runs through Joseph Newcomb (1751-1832) to Andrew Newcomb (1781-1876) to Ruth's father Barnaby Newcomb (1805-1884). The significance of Barnaby's first name is worth dwelling on for a moment. His great-grandmother Mercy Barnaby (1730-1776), wife of John Newcomb (1720-1778), was born in Plymouth, Massachusetts and was descended from Richard Warren who arrived in America on the Mayflower and Robert Bartlett who arrived three years later in 1663 on the Anna<sup>75</sup> and married one of Richard Warren's daughters.

### Conclusion

While we have seen above that Henry J. DeForest appears to have a wealth of Loyalist ancestors in his tree, he was perhaps trumped by his wife Ruth, who might have been eligible to apply for membership in the General Society of Mayflower Descendants<sup>76</sup>.

My hope is that this brief overview of Henry J. DeForest's life, art and family history will help to resurrect an interest in the paintings of this New Brunswick native son. The canvases he has left behind constitute a colourful and historic record of the grand landscapes of British Columbia, New Zealand and many other parts of the world, including the area around the Bay of Fundy.

## Henry Josiah DeForest (1855-1924)

<sup>1</sup>Graham M. Segger, FCPA, FCA is a retired chartered accountant living in Port Credit, Ontario. Graham writes extensively on a wide variety of history and nature subjects – [www.grahamsegger.com](http://www.grahamsegger.com).

<sup>2</sup> Guide and Handbook to the Museum, Vancouver, B.C., 1908, p 12

<sup>3</sup> The author has assembled images of over 70 of H.J. DeForest's paintings spanning the period 1889 to 1923 and has documentary evidence of more than 100 other paintings. He is constantly searching for new examples of his work. Anyone with additional information or material relating to Henry J. DeForest or his loyalist ancestor Ephraim DeForest is encouraged to contact him at [graham {dot} segger {at} gmail {dot} com](mailto:graham.segger@gmail.com).

<sup>4</sup> *The Province*, Vancouver, 27 Sept 1916

<sup>5</sup> The mountains and passes inscribed were Lucern, Rigi, Pilatus, Col de la Forclaz, Col de Balm, Chapeau, Mauvais Pas, Mer de Glace, Montan Vert, Grands Mulets, Mont Blanc, Col de Voza, Col de Fours, Col de la Seign, GD St Bernard, Glacier des Bossons. Museum of Vancouver catalogue numbers H973.642.3 and H973.642.2a-b <https://openmv.museumofvancouver.ca/node/76734> accessed 20 June 2019

<sup>6</sup> This quote was sourced from an overview of H.J. DeForest's life prepared by Gary Sim for his excellent *Art and Artists in Exhibition Vancouver 1890 – 1950* series <http://www.british-columbia-artists.ca/deforest.pdf> accessed 10 July 2019.

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Montière, *L'Académie Julian et ses élèves canadiens : Paris, 1880-1900*, pp 215-217, 253, PhD thesis, Faculté des arts et des sciences – Département d'histoire de l'art et d'études cinématographiques, Université de Montréal, 2011 - <https://papyrus.bib.umontreal.ca/xmlui/handle/1866/5900> accessed 22 July 2019. Mr. Montière states that Henry DeForest lived at 44, rue Jacob while studying in Paris in 1896 and that he had previously studied in Edinburgh and at the South Kensington School of Art.

<sup>8</sup> Collection of the author. Oil on board, 20.5 x 30.5 cm. In a 5 Sept 1894 article in the *Vancouver Daily World* two paintings by H.J. DeForest are described as containing moonlight scenes painted near Sicamous (Lake Shuswap, north of Vernon, BC). This painting could possibly be one of those.

<sup>9</sup> Image used with the permission of the New Brunswick Museum. Oil on canvas, support: 23 × 33.2 cm, frame: 34 × 43 cm, Gift of Wesley Jones, 1964 (A64.11). This painting was likely executed while DeForest was in Europe. As such it may or may not represent a Canadian seascape. The extreme tides which are apparent in the painting provide some support that this might be a Bay of Fundy scene.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in an article titled A Meritorious Work of Art in *The Province*, Vancouver, 13 Oct 1900

<sup>11</sup> Mentioned in an article titled Two New Paintings in *The Province*, Vancouver, 20 Apr 1901

<sup>12</sup> Image used with the permission of the Vancouver Masonic Library and Archives, and the Library and Archives Board of Trustees. Oil on canvas, 71 x 101.6 cm.

<sup>13</sup> Image from the catalogue of the 1906 CNE Department of Fine Arts Exhibition. No dimensions were given but it was included in the oil paintings section and listed for sale for \$200 (about \$4,500 in 2019 currency). Thanks to the Archives staff at the Art Gallery of Ontario for procuring this image from the catalogue in their collection.

<sup>14</sup> The Valley of the Wauganni (Whanganui) River, at Evening, NZ was entry #122 and was hung on the North Wall of Gallery 11 of the Fine Arts Building in Chicago. This painting was created by Mr. DeForest while living in Taylor Village, N.B.. His wife stated in his March 1924 obituary that he won a prize for this entry but he is not listed as one of the five Canadian prize winners in the official program. Source – *World's Columbian Exposition, Revised Catalogue, Department of Fine Arts*, W.B. Conkey & Co., Chicago, 1893, p 192

<sup>15</sup> Additional examples of H.J. DeForest's paintings are found in the public collections of the Auckland War Memorial Museum, New Brunswick Museum, Nova Scotia Archives, Museum of Vancouver, City of Vancouver Archives, Royal BC Museum and Archives, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver Masonic Library and Archives, and the Sechelt Public Library and Archives.

<sup>16</sup> Art Unions were common throughout the nineteenth century. Normally the model was for an art dealer to make art available of varying values from different artists. Purchasers would buy tickets which would guarantee that they would receive at least one painting and give them a chance of "winning" one of significantly greater size or value. See Joy Sperling, *Art, Cheap and Good: The Art Union in England and the United States, 1840–60* - <http://19thc-artworldwide.org/index.php/spring02/196--qart-cheap-and-goodq-the-art-union-in-england-and-the-united-states-184060> accessed on 20 June 2019

<sup>17</sup> *Nelson Evening Mail*, Vol. XXIII, Issue 185, 24 August 1889, Nelson, South Island, NZ: 55 tickets were for sale for £2 10s each. 1st prize - Lake Manapouri (Fiordland National Park) value £52 10s; 2nd prize - Sunset from Stoke (Near Nelson) value £36 15s; 3rd prize - Moonlight in Preservation Inlet (Fjordland National Park) value £15 15s; 4th prize - Christchurch-Hokitika Road Looking South – value £10 10s; 5th prize - Christchurch-Hokitika Road Looking North – value £10 10s and 50 smaller 12 x 8 inch paintings

<sup>18</sup> *Observer*, Vol. X, Issue 622, 29 November 1890, Auckland, North Island, NZ: 75 tickets were for sale for £3 10s each. Five grand prizes valued at £165 and 70 smaller paintings valued at £5

## Henry Josiah DeForest (1855-1924)

<sup>19</sup> *New Zealand Herald*, Vol. XXVII, Issue 8413, 14 November 1890, Auckland, NZ. The Victoria Arcade was a magnificent building which housed many artist studios over the years.

<sup>20</sup> *Vancouver Daily World*, 13 April 1892; *The Province*, Vancouver, 23 May 1902

<sup>21</sup> Una Platts, *Nineteenth Century New Zealand Artists: A Guide and Handbook*, Avon Fine Prints Limited, Christchurch, 1979

<sup>22</sup> *Moncton Times*, 17 Oct 1892; *H.J. DeForest 1892 Travel Journal* transcribed and indexed by the author from a copy in the H.J. DeForest Artist File at the Glenbow Museum, Calgary

<sup>23</sup> *St. John Globe*, 17 Nov 1892, p 2

<sup>24</sup> *Colonist*, Vol. XXXII, Issue 5495, 16 May 1889, Nelson, NZ

<sup>25</sup> Mr. DeForest joined Freemasonry in Melbourne, Australia in 1887, was Worshipful Master of Cascade Lodge No. 12 AF&AM in Vancouver in 1910, Zerubbabel of the Order of the Royal Arch, Chapter 98 in 1907 and was active in the Rose Croix Scottish Rite and Shriners Club in Vancouver and Calgary. Trevor W. McKeown, Curator of the Vancouver Masonic Library and Archives, has assembled an excellent collection of information about Mr. DeForest on the website of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon - [http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/history/deforest\\_h.html](http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/history/deforest_h.html). Accessed 8 July 2019

<sup>26</sup> William Wylie Thom, *The Fine Arts in Vancouver, 1886-1930: An Historical Survey*, A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of Fine Arts, University of British Columbia, April 1969

<sup>27</sup> Initial salary was \$300 per year to work every day from 2:00 to 6:00. *The Province*, Vancouver, 27 Jun 1905; This museum was the forerunner of what is now the Museum of Vancouver (MOV)

<sup>28</sup> For a list of DeForest artifacts in the Museum of Vancouver archives type "DeForest" into the following search dialogue - <https://openmov.museumofvancouver.ca/collection> accessed 20 June 2019

<sup>29</sup> Ancestry.com. *Censuses of Canada* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2006.

<sup>30</sup> Gary Sim, *Summary of Vancouver Artists Listed in City Directories, 1886-1920*, Contained in presentation to Vancouver Historical Society titled Early Vancouver Artists, 23 Feb 2017 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dXnqjCmeI4> (Summary is displayed at 28:30) accessed 05 July 2019

<sup>31</sup> Albert H. Robson, *Canadian Landscape Painters*, The Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1932; William Colgate, *Canadian Art: Its Origin and Development*, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, Toronto, 1967; J. Russell Harper, *Early Painters and Engravers in Canada*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1971

<sup>32</sup> R. A. Tweedie, Fred Copswell, W. Stewart MacNult, *Arts in New Brunswick*, Brunswick Press, Fredericton, 1967. Regrettably these authors only devoted 100 words to H.J. DeForest in this limited edition 280 page Centennial project publication.

<sup>33</sup> [https://app.pch.gc.ca/application/aac-aic/artiste\\_detailier\\_bas-artist\\_detail\\_bas.app?rID=4413&fID=2&lang=en&qlang=en&pID=1&an=de+forest&ps=50&sort=AM\\_ASC](https://app.pch.gc.ca/application/aac-aic/artiste_detailier_bas-artist_detail_bas.app?rID=4413&fID=2&lang=en&qlang=en&pID=1&an=de+forest&ps=50&sort=AM_ASC) accessed 11 July 2019

<sup>34</sup> Public Archives of New Brunswick (PANB), MC223/H2 (Anglican Diocese of Fredericton fonds/Parish of Hampton), microfilm number is F23656, Registration 1494

<sup>35</sup> Ancestry.com. *Censuses of Canada* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2006

<sup>36</sup> J. Francis Bursill and H. J. De Forest, illustrated by F. Noel Bursill and others, *Guide and Handbook to the Museum, Vancouver, B.C.*, 1908 – The variation may be attributed to the fact that the co-authors Mr. Bursill and Mr. DeForest were responsible for contributing different sections of the text and Mr. Bursill had final editorial control.

<sup>37</sup> References to H.J. DeForest in the Calgary Herald and other Alberta publications during the period 1921 through 1924, as well as membership in local clubs and his death registration, confirm his residence as Calgary.

<sup>38</sup> PANB; Daniel F. Johnson : Volume 48 Number 1649; *The Daily Sun*, St. John, N.B., 16 May 1879 - "d. 15th inst., at Mrs. Reed's, Horsfield St. (St. John) by Rev. B. Chappell, Henry DeForest, Amherst, N.S. / Mrs. Ruth Wood, Harvey (Albert Co.)" . Rev. Chappell was a Methodist who lived briefly in St. John. <https://archives.gnb.ca/Search/NewspaperVitalStats/Details.aspx?culture=en-CA&guid=23c69f32-80ed-448e-bc4f-1495cb8a3278&r=1&ni=78882>

<sup>39</sup> BC Archives, Registration 1921-09-227682, Vital Stat Images(s): [004400868\\_00190.jpg](#) accessed 8 July 2019

<sup>40</sup> Archives of Ontario. *Registrations of Births and Stillbirths – 1869-1913*. MS 929, Series: 27, No. 12, Registration 38597. Born 4 Sept 1875, registered 8 Feb 1876. Ruth's father Peter Frank and mother Alice Porter farmed on Con. 5, Lot 18, Vaughan, York Co., Ontario

<sup>41</sup> <https://nbgsc.ca/cpage.php?pt=179> (accessible by NBGS members only – accessed 8 July 2019). While this may be a tertiary source, the data contained in this database for the Newcomb family is supported by numerous other sources consulted including the Newcomb book noted below.

<sup>42</sup> Genealogical details relating to the Newcomb family and Ruth's marriage to John Wood have been extracted from

the 1874 *Genealogical memoir of the Newcomb family* and its updated 1923 sequel *Andrew Newcomb (1618-1686) and His Descendants* as well as NBGS Families files (see later endnotes for details of these sources). These are tertiary records but generally considered of a relatively high level of reliability. Confirming details to a higher genealogical proof standard was beyond the scope of this Henry J. DeForest research project.

<sup>43</sup> PANB, Daniel F. Johnson: Volume 37 Number 1251, *The Daily Telegraph*, 24 Sept 1875, d. Hopewell Corner (Albert Co.) Monday 20th inst., Herbert Wood only child of Mrs. John Wood, age 21.

<sup>44</sup> B.L. Murphy and T.L. Krainock (editors and publishers), *Diary of Ann Eliza Rogers: April 17, 1852-March 9, 1896*, 1995, p117 (entry for 17 Jan 1872)

<sup>45</sup> PANB, *Albert County Probate Records, 1867-1879*, Page 109 – administration granted to Ruth J. Wood, Hopewell; Inventory, *Estate of John Wood*, filed 8 May 1872, RS61/A (Albert County Probate Court Records/Probate files).

<sup>46</sup> Lovett was also born in Albert County, New Brunswick and died in Shanghai, China where he was working as a Trade Representative. He was publisher of the *Seattle Trade Register* in Washington for a number of years.

<sup>47</sup> Parents were Isaac Wood and Mary Jane (Murray) Wood who died six days apart.

<sup>48</sup> Ancestry.com. *1871 Census of Canada* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2006.

<sup>49</sup> BC Archives – <https://search-bcarchives.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/deforest-ruth-y> - Probate file obtained and viewed in June 2019.

<sup>50</sup> Province of Alberta, Registration of Death, Record 172 of 1924, Date of death 23 March 1924, aged 69. Cause of death was asthenia following peritonitis at the Calgary General Hospital. He had an operation for appendicitis on 5 March 1924 per an accompanying Medical Certificate of Cause of Death and information in his obituary in *The Province*, Vancouver, 24 March 1924, p. 26. His widow Grace's Probate Petition claimed an estate of \$6,808, two thirds of which was real estate in Vancouver.

<sup>51</sup> [https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/26301631/henry-josiah-de\\_forest](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/26301631/henry-josiah-de_forest) accessed 18 July 2019

<sup>52</sup> Kings County Museum, Film # 1087, St. Paul's Anglican Church, Hampton, Kings County baptisms; 25 December 1821, son of Henry DeForest and Mary Fowler. Henry is listed as a shoemaker, the same occupation as his grandfather Ephraim DeForest.

<sup>53</sup> Both were grandchildren of Nathan DeForest (1765-1940) and Anah Hoyt (1767-1849) who married on 07 Oct 1787. At least one researcher claims that they were also 5<sup>th</sup> cousins through the Fowler descent but I've not had time to trace this back. The DeForests and Fowlers were both large Loyalist era settler families in Kings County, N.B. and surrounding area. There was a significant amount of intermarriage between these two families.

<sup>54</sup> Anah is the name she used throughout her life, but her 17 April 1825 St. Paul's Anglican Church, Hampton Parish, Kings Co., N.B. baptism registration (#252) gives her forename as Hanah.

<sup>55</sup> PANB; Ancestry.com. New Brunswick, Canada, Marriages, 1789-1950 [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2017 "James F. Fowler of the Parish of Hampton, Kings County and Anah Jane Fowler, same place, were married by license this twenty-fifth day of September in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty ... registered 15th October 1850"

<sup>56</sup> I was quite excited to learn that Josiah Fowler's father Gabriel Fowler (1757-1852) is one of the ten Kings County Loyalist families to be profiled in the *New Brunswick Loyalist Families* project which is recreating the stories of Loyalists of the American Revolution utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology and the resources found within The Loyalist Collection and UNB Libraries. The Kings County release is expected later in the fall of 2019 - <https://loyalist.lib.unb.ca/story-maps> accessed 17 July 2019. The Fowler's settled in French Village partially on the site where St. Andrews Anglican Church now sits. The Fowlers were originally from Harrison, Westchester County, New York.

<sup>57</sup> PANB, Microfilm F-9095, *Kings County Marriages 1865-3765*

<sup>58</sup> Used with permission of the owner, a descendant of Henry's brother. If the date of 1879 is correct this would have been painted the year he turned 24, married and left for Europe. A 1908 portrait of the family of Henry's brother shows this painting hanging behind them on the living room wall.

<sup>59</sup> Anah and George appear to have been somewhat itinerant after 1881 as they were back in Norton in 1891 and in 1892 Henry described visiting his "dear old mother and father" in Painsec Junction, Westmorland Co., N.B. (just north of the current Moncton airport), where Anah remained in 1901 after George's passing at the age of 93. Anah Burnett: Ancestry.com. *1871, 1881, 1891, 1901 Census of Canada* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2006.

<sup>60</sup> *1892 Travel Journal*

<sup>61</sup> James was a railway station master and worked for a time in New London, CT before moving back to New Brunswick and then to Claresholm, Alberta.

<sup>62</sup> Susan Derkoch, wife of Don DeForest a descendant of James Fowler DeForest, Jr., maintains several excellent

## Henry Josiah DeForest (1855-1924)

---

DeForest family trees and has been very helpful in this research

<sup>63</sup> *1892 Travel Journal*; The story related to H.J. DeForest by George A. DeForest about their more distant ancestry was that Ephraim was descended from three brothers who were exiled from Normandy to England about 1600 and from there the family made its way to Holland and eventually New Holland. I've not attempted to confirm these pre-Ephraim ancestors. George A. DeForest (1834- ) was a son of Charles DeForest (1808-1854) and grandson of Nathan DeForest and therefore a first cousin once removed from Henry J. DeForest. George was born in New Brunswick but immigrated to the USA in 1864.

<sup>64</sup> Mr. Rutherford's wife Anah Marion DeForest (1897-1978) was H.J. DeForest's niece. He was a former newspaper editor, researcher and writer of the Royal Bank of Canada Monthly Letter from 1943 to 1975. Caution should be exercised as there are a few minor errors in those charts.

<sup>65</sup> Watch for a post written by the author about Ephraim DeForest in the *Atlantic Loyalist Connection* website of the University of New Brunswick in the fall of 2019 - <https://loyalist.lib.unb.ca/atlantic-loyalist-connections>

<sup>66</sup> PANB, Daniel F. Johnson: *New Brunswick Courier*, St. John, 11 April 1840, d. Kingston (Kings Co.) 30th March, Nathan DEFOREST, age 75

<sup>67</sup> The name of the town was changed from Reading to Redding around the time of the American Revolution

<sup>68</sup> *Return of the Families etc. embarked on board the Union Transport, Cousett, Wilson Master, Began Huntingdon Bay, April 11th and completed April 16th 1783.*

<sup>69</sup> PANB, Microfilm F-16302, *New Brunswick Land Grants, 1784 - 1997 (RS686)*. Name spelled Ephraim DeForrest. Lot #2 of a 9,382 acre land grant in common. Petition was registered 10 Feb 1786. For a discussion of the subsequent land transfers for this lot see <http://www.kingstonnb.ca/Built%20Heritage/MacFarland's.html> accessed 30 July 2019

<sup>70</sup> Nathan is recorded as a private in the return of troops of 15 June 1782 on the muster roll for Major Upham's Company – Source: Carleton's Loyalist Index, Sir Guy Carleton Branch, UELAC (British Headquarters (Carleton) Papers)

<sup>71</sup> Some researchers have asserted that Gabriel and James Fowler, who were neighbours in French Village, were third cousins.

<sup>72</sup> John Bearse Newcomb, *Genealogical Memoir of the Newcomb Family, containing records of nearly every person of the name in America from 1635-1874*, Elgin, Ill., Printed for the author by Knight & Leonard, Chicago, 1874, 998 pages. <https://archive.org/details/genealogicalmemo1874newc> accessed 18 June 2019

<sup>73</sup> A revised version of the Newcomb book was created in 1923 - Bethuel Merritt Newcomb, *Andrew Newcomb (1618-1686) and His Descendants*, privately printed for the author by The Tuttle, Morehouse and Taylor Co., New Haven, CT, 1021 pages. This revised version should be accessed for research purposes. Ruth Newcomb material is on page 412 <https://archive.org/details/andrewnewcomb16100newc/page/412> accessed 18 June 2019

<sup>74</sup> See also A.W.H. Eaton, *The History of Kings County, Nova Scotia: Heart of the Acadian Land: Giving a sketch of the French and their expulsion and a history of the New England Planters who came in their stead with many genealogies 1604-1910*, The Salem Press Company, Salem, 1910 <https://archive.org/details/historykingscou00eatogoo/page/n10> accessed 18 June 2019

<sup>75</sup> I've tracked this information to multiple Mayflower related sources and was first alerted to it by an entry on page 60 of the revised Newcomb book - <https://archive.org/details/andrewnewcomb16100newc/page/60> accessed 18 June 2019

<sup>76</sup> See article by the author titled *Honing Your Skills With Heritage Society Applications* from the May 2019 Families publication of the Ontario Genealogical Society for a general overview of the process for making heritage society applications - <http://grahamsegger.com/general-interest-articles/genealogy/honing-your-skills-with-heritage-society-applications/> accessed 17 July 2019